



**BITTERROOT CONSERVATION DISTRICT
(BCD)
1709 NORTH FIRST STREET
HAMILTON, MONTANA 59840
MINUTES
July 14, 2026**

Bitterroot Conservation District (BCD) Board of Supervisors scheduled meeting for Tuesday the 14th of July 2026, 7:00 p.m., 1709 North First Street, Hamilton, MT.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Tommy Dobberstein; Jeff Mark; Bob Nelson; Mike Hansen; Joel Johnson; Kent Myers; Todd Reagan; Paul Rosenberg, Chad Sutherlin

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Dan Kerslake; Brent Pristis

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mike Derosier, Stevensville resident; Miles Carder; Aiden Curry; Jason Lindstrom, Ravalli County Fish Biologist, Fish, Wildlife, & Parks; Rob Livesay, Ravalli County Planning and Floodplain Department; Haley Netherton-Morrison, ORISE-USFS Postdoctoral Fellow (by Zoom); Tim Puczkowskyj, District Administrator, (BCD)

MINUTES

Rosenberg motioned to approve the minutes of the June 30, 2026, meeting. Reagan seconded; motion carried.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD

1. Myers motioned to post the BCD adopted rules changes public hearing notice in the newspapers. Dobberstein seconded; motion carried.
2. Rosenberg motioned to sponsor the Bitterroot Water Partnership Annual River Clean Up event with a donation of \$750.00. Dobberstein seconded; motion carried. Myers abstained from voting, advocating for a higher donation amount.
3. No-Till Drill Rental
 - a. The board reviewed a No-Till Drill usage report complied by Puczkowskyj and discussed requesting Teller Wildlife Refuge for usage data.
4. Haley Netherton-Morrison, ORISE-USFS Postdoctoral Fellow presented information on the Fire Adapted Bitterroot program she is working on. She is researching to understand partner prospectives as part of programs like this. Myers commented that we are supportive of these programs but are not directly involved. Rosenberg recommended she contact Bitterroot Resource Conservation & Development, specifically Josh Smith. He is directly involved.

BCD COST-SHARE/EDUCATION/GRANT PROGRAMS

1. Cost-Share Program

- a. Mark overviewed the 2027 Cost-Share Applications and made a motion to approve the Cost-Share Committee agreed upon contract amounts totaling \$24,834.00 for the 7 applications. Myers seconded; motion carried

BCD COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Myers, Open Lands Board.

- a. The board visited Rocky Lynn's property last week for a possible conservation easement. It is located 1 mile north of Corvallis, MT on Eastside Highway. RCCP Land Trust Grant is used for smaller projects like this property. It enables smaller acre farms to be a part of conservation easements. Open Lands board will motion to the County Commissioners to accept this easement.

2. Reagan, Education Committee. No new updates.

PARTNER REPORTS

1. Rob Livesay, Ravalli County Planning and Floodplain Department.

- a. Inspected the Bitterroot East channel diversion.
- b. Reviewed that for every floodplain permit that is applied for the applicant needs a waiver for a 310 permit and may also need a 318 permit waiver.
- c. Typically, BCD would send a 310 waiver letter upon reviewing the project.

2. Jason Lindstrom, Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks

- a. Reviewed Permit No. SPA-27-26 R2/ Trout Creek: Ford Crossing
- b. Reviewed Permit No. SPA-28-26 R2/ Sleeping Child Creek: Sleeping Child Road Stabilization
- c. The Bitterroot River is getting close to needing Hoot Owl restrictions. Many rivers in the rest of the state are about to go into Hoot Owl restrictions.

NOTICES

Reviewed:

1. Central and Eastern Montana Invasive Species Team Quarterly Meeting, July 22nd, 2026, 10:00am-12:00pm, Via Zoom.
2. New Job Opportunity: State Coordinator for Rangeland Resources. Apply online at Montant.gov.
3. Water Right Notification for Application 76H 3017086: Surface water application 76H 3017086 on Gash Creek is at the following step: ISSUED
4. 3rd Governor's Summit On Local Food & Agriculture, October 23-24, 2026, Helena, MT
5. Bitterroot Chamber Ag & Local Foods Committee, Farmer Education Scholarship. Apply online at Bitterrootchamber.com, applications accepted year-round.
6. Victor Community Garden Plots available, \$35.00 per year, plot size in 20' x 20'. Contact Jill at 406-360-1751
7. Montana Agritourism Association Conference, November 5th & 6th 2026, Lewistown MT.

OLD BUSINESS

1. 310 Complaint BT033-2026 Brad Johnson against Summit Heating & Cooling Inc./Christisen Creek-digging in the creek without a permit. (Reagan, Hansen). A site visit was conducted, but they could not see any of the work that was supposedly done. Mark commented that without enough evidence we

are unable to substantiate the claim and pursue it. Reagan motioned to deny this complaint on the grounds that there is no substantive evidence. Dobberstein seconded; motion carried.

2. 310 Application BT049-2026 Ravalli Electric, Joe Parsons/Iron Cap Creek-utility bore. (Sutherlin, Kerslake) Sutherlin motioned to accept this application as proposed. Myers seconded; motion carried.
3. 310 7-Year Application BT50-2026 for 310 Permit BT039-2021 Double Fork Ranch, ETNA, Webfoot, Union Ditches/Bitterroot River East/West Split-annual irrigation maintenance. (Dobberstein, Eldredge). Dobberstein motioned to approve as proposed. Reagan seconded; motion carried.

OTHER OLD BUSINESS

1. 310 Application BT058-2025/Brian Melius/Repairing Existing Leaking Pond/Blodget Creek: Verification of Project Completion. Myers reported that the project looked good and the applicant did the work he said he was going to do. He used a fabricated rubber liner.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 310 Application BT051-2026/Mike Sass/Bitterroot River: Separating Pond from ditch (Reagan, Hansen) Reagan motioned that this is not a project and the applicant does not need a 310 permit. Myers seconded; motion carried.
2. 310 Application BT052-2026/Trevor Stotka/Cow Creek: Dredging creek to prevent flooding of hay fields (Dobberstein). Dobberstein reported that it is a very narrow creek that is filled with a lot of sand. He will want to do a follow up inspection once the project has been completed and again next year, questioning if the sediment will return. Dobberstein motioned to approve this application as proposed without a 10-year maintenance permit. Reagan seconded; motion carried.
3. 310 Application BT053-2026/Brady Adams/East Fork Bitterroot: Fallen tree removal (Reagan, Hansen). There are many fallen trees on this property, and it will be a lot of work, but it has created good fish habitat. Reagan motioned to approve this application with modifications. Myers seconded; motion carried.
4. 10 Year 310 Application BT054-2026/Sunset Irrigation District/Burnt Fork Creek: 2 irrigation diversions maintenance (Sutherlin/Kerslake). Tabled for inspection
5. 310 Application BT055-2026/Charlie Lambson/Bitterroot River: Septic Tank Installation (Sutherlin, Kerslake) Sutherlin motioned that this application is not a project. Reagan seconded; motion carried.
6. 310 Complaint BT056-2026/Michael Williams/Sheafman Creek: Digging without a 310 Permit (Dobberstein) Tabled for inspection.
7. 310 Complaint BT057-2026/Mary Ann Cusenza/Harlan Creek: Landowner altered stream channel without a 310 Permit. (Rosenberg, Johnson) Tabled for inspection.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS

1. Complaint follow-up Deborah Buckley/ Twin Creek/Construction debris mitigation (Sutherlin, Kerslake). Puczkowskyj will follow up. Deborah may have meant to contact Department of Environmental Quality.
2. 310 Application BT058-2026 Mathew Troyer/North Burnt Fork Creek: Bridge Repairs (Sutherlin, Kerslake) Tabled for inspection.
3. 310 Application BT059-2026 Mathew Troyer/North Burnt Fork Creek: 10-Year Maintenance Permit (Sutherlin, Kerslake) Tabled for inspection.

4. 310 Emergency BT060-2026 Meg Johnston/ Kootenai Creek: Failed Coffin Dam Clean Up (Sutherlin, Kerslake)

PUBLIC OPEN MIC

Roy Fenster commented about the language of the BCD Appendix, stating that the wording of acquiring landowner permission should read, "you must seek landowner permission" instead of "you should seek landowner permission" when placing woody debris above the high-water mark. He feels it is not consistent with floodplain regulations. There needs to be better clarification of that rule.

DISTRICT BUSINESS

1. County checks 107310-107314, Rosenberg motioned to approve County checks 107310-107314, with the addition of county check 107315. Myers seconded; motion carried.
2. BCD Credit Card for Puczkowskyj/Supervisors.
3. FY26/27 Budget.
4. Annual Plan.
 - a. Add Brent Pristis as associate supervisor and adjust rules approval date.
5. Mark motioned to approve Puczkowskyj's District Administrator wage increase to GS-9, S1. Reagan seconded. Dobberstein paused the motion for discussion to understand how the compensation amount was determined. Motion carried.
6. Bonding Insurance for Puczkowskyj and Rosenberg.
 - a. Rosenberg discussed the Surty bond and who should be covered. Although other Conservation Districts are covered for 10k, we should be insured for much more, reflecting the BCD Mill Levy income.

INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE

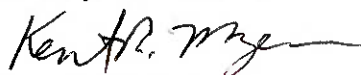
Reviewed:

1. MACD Communications Newsletter
2. MACD District Dispatch
3. NAISMA Field Notes - July 2026
4. OffRange – Issue #186
5. RCEDA Producer Newsletter
6. Western Landowners Digest Newsletter

Mark adjourned the meeting at 8:41 pm

The next BCD Board meeting will be held in person on Tuesday, the 28th of July 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

Kent Myers, Vice Chairman



Date: 07-28-2026

Tim Puczkowskyj, District Administrator

